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ACTION MEMORANDUM

October 27, 1981

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TO: The Secretary
THROUGH: D - Judge Clark
FROM: S/P - James Roche, *acting*
SUBJECT: Creation of the Raoul Wallenberg Award
for Human Freedom

ISSUE FOR DECISION

To recommend to the President that he propose that a joint U.S.-Swedish commission be created to establish and choose recipients of a new award to be called: the Raoul Wallenberg Award for Human Freedom.

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

On September 22, the House of Representatives voted 396 to 2 to grant Raoul Wallenberg honorary U.S. citizenship. The Senate had already approved the bill by unanimous voice vote on August 3. This is only the second time honorary U.S. citizenship has been granted; the first was to Winston Churchill. An important purpose behind the bill was to provide a mechanism for the United States Government to request an official accounting from the Soviets on Wallenberg's disappearance and whereabouts.

On October 5, President Reagan signed the bill and remarked:

"In 1945, in violation of diplomatic immunity and international law, he was seized by the Soviet Union. The Nazis were gone and the Soviets had come in as an ally, and yet today there is evidence that he is still imprisoned by the Soviets. Wherever he is, his humanity burns like a torch."

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In a recent discussion with S/P, Ambassador Max Kampelman suggested we seize the momentum coming from the bestowal of honorary U.S. citizenship on Wallenberg and propose to the PM of Sweden that a Raoul Wallenberg Award for Human Freedom be created. A joint U.S.-Swedish commission of prominent citizens from the respective countries would be formed to administer the Award which would be given to an individual or group who had made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of human rights and freedom. Like the Nobel Prize, an established amount of money would accompany the award. However, this Award would be given on an "as merited" basis rather than annually. We would envisage financing coming from private sources.

The advantages of this proposal are:

- It gives the Administration a clear and visible human rights initiative, particularly in view of the current development of a comprehensive human rights policy.
- It focuses indirectly on the Soviet "Gulag" issue we are trying to develop, and provides a vehicle to examine the matter of dissidents in general.
- It should receive broad Congressional support.
- It can play a useful role in the "shaping of European Attitudes" political offensive we are currently involved in.
- It would provide a vehicle for a broad range of human rights issues we are interested in furthering.

One potential problem is the make-up of the commission and administration of the Award. Under the joint U.S.-Swedish commission proposal, it is possible that once the Award were created it could take on a direction of its own that could be difficult to control. However, this should be manageable if we have adequate and carefully selected U.S. representation on the commission. An award could be given only if there were unanimous agreement, thus giving the U.S. side a veto if necessary.

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It is also possible the Swedes would be unwilling to participate if they believed the Award were being established as part of an obvious anti-Soviet campaign.

An alternative approach would be to establish a commission of U.S. representatives only, thus ensuring greater control over the selection of candidates for the Award. However, this would lower the credibility of the Award in the international community as well as leave it vulnerable to charges of being created strictly for anti-Soviet purposes, thus reducing its broader usefulness.

RECOMMENDATION

That you forward to the President the proposal to the Swedish government for the joint creation and administration of a Raoul Wallenberg Award for Human Freedom (using the attached draft letter from President Reagan to the Prime Minister of Sweden.)

Attachment:

Memo to the President

Clearances: EUR/NE - Mr. Reams EUR/SOV - Mr. Combs
EUR Mr. Palmer HA - Mr. Palmer
S/P - Mr. Kaplan P - Mr. Weisz

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